

AS TO A HOME IN MANHATTAN

A PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS HOUSE HUNTERS NOW.

Rooms in Flats Smaller, They Say, and Rents Higher—Private Houses Scarce—Single Floors in Demand—Still, People Will Live Here.

House-hunting time is around again. So is the house hunter, or rather, the flat hunter; for in these days few of the mighty host of Manhattan dwellers who belong neither to the rich nor to the very rich even dream of having a whole house to themselves. They cherish no delusions on that score.

For one reason, the small, private house is scarce. In some localities, indeed, it has been pushed almost out of existence by the flatness and the apartment hotel, and the houses still to be found in good localities below Fifty-fifth street bring big rents and cost four or five times as much to equip and run as a flat. In the more populous districts of Manhattan during the last two years or so, row after row of private houses has been pulled down to make room for sky-scraping flats, and in less congested districts further uptown, where houses of moderate size are more plentiful, the population that settles there finds the rents too high when coupled with the cost of maintaining a house, and so often passes them by in favor of settling down in a flat.

Real estate men admit that in the newer districts where building operations are most active very few three and four-story houses are being erected at present. Land owners, they say, find it much more profitable to erect flathouses and apartment hotels. Consequently buildings of this sort now tower all over the upper part of Manhattan, as well as in the downtown districts.

Below the Central Park, except in the streets and avenues where dwellings are occupied chiefly by their owners, the private house is fast being laid low, and some people prophesy that before many years there won't be a private house to rent in a good locality from the Battery to Fifty-ninth street.

People of means recognized this tendency of the real estate market long ago, and those who meant to continue living in Manhattan refused to run the risk of hiring a house and went to work by or to build. Thus it happens that in certain districts almost every foot of land is owned by the residents, who reserve the property for private use only and not for speculation.

In these localities, populated almost entirely by the very rich, the apartment house seldom darkens the landscape, but everywhere else it has the right of way and is fast brushing the private house out of its path. This is the interesting condition that concerns Manhattan people more than it does any one else.

At any rate, as a result of it, that part of the community conscious enough to grapple with the problem of housekeeping has reluctantly, but none the less surely, come to the conclusion that people of moderate means, ambitious to live in rooms bigger than a bandbox, or big enough at least to swing a cat in—although, come to think of it, cats are not tolerated in apartment houses—must move out of Manhattan to do it. There is absolutely no other way.

One of this class admitted the other day, after climbing innumerable flights of stairs and keeping a steady company with elevator boys for nearly a month, that although a family may pay as cheaply in New York as they can in the suburbs, in order to do it, they must put up with cramped quarters.

"It seems to me," she added despairingly, "that building, the technical name for it, is smaller and smaller. In most of the low-priced apartments, the six rooms and bath are crisscrossed in the advertisement, and the partitions are so knocked down, make only one good sized room."

"Business is booming," remarked a real estate man, who could not resist the temptation to point out the fact that about 200 apartment houses on the West Side between Sixtieth and 125th streets, containing something like 3,000 apartments, ranging in price from \$25 to \$200 a month, are not a single one of the forty-dollar apartments vacant and we have 200 of them. In fact, the vacancies are among the high-priced variety.

"Rents are no cheaper, either, than they have been in the last two years, and, although they can be made a little less, they are not likely to be made much less, and they may jump up a little."

"We can give a very nice little flat of four or five rooms and bath for \$25 a month, but not of course in a first-class building. For \$35 we can do better, and many of our \$40 flats are in an elevator building. The average rent paid in this part of the city for a comfortable apartment with elevator and all modern improvements, is from \$60 to \$100 a year. Above 125th street rents are even higher."

"The newer apartment houses aim to give more in some respects than those built six or seven years ago, more rooms, and in some cases an elevator, but in other respects they do not improve on the older buildings. As a rule, they are not so solidly constructed, less care is taken to deaden the walls and floors, and the rooms are more crowded. Quiet tenets to live in one of them is almost impossible."

"This, of course, can't be helped. What most people are after in a cheap flat is quiet rather than quality. It is so much easier to store away a numerous family in six small rooms than in three larger rooms; and people with rooming places and large families become inured to noise sooner than most others."

But, as most people have discovered, even the payment of \$1,000 or more a year for an apartment pretty well up town is not bound to insure either large rooms or light bedrooms. In the highest priced, as in the lower, the tendency is to squeeze the most lighted bedrooms opening upon an air-shaft. A thousand-dollar flat means more trimmings and carvings and mirrors, and sometimes, too, a very cleverly planned and pay for the sake of comparative quiet and living in a good neighborhood it only helps to emphasize the fact that rents have reached a high point and that there is little likelihood that they will soon drop in Manhattan.

Prior to the May-day shuffle, women hunt patiently for weeks for what promises to be a fairly comfortable flat free from nuisances and at a reasonable rent, and every year the test to find out a house is harder. If the rent is reasonable, there are likely to be objectionable features; if the flat has no other drawbacks the rent is apt to be high.

This year's flat hunters, it seems, have come to the conclusion that in the last half dozen years not only have the rents of housekeeping apartments soared to an "awful point," as one father of a family put it, but those asked in the apartment hotels have been equally exorbitant. Even in the upper West Side—a region popularly, even if mistakenly, supposed to represent the acme of comfort at minimum prices, so far as dwelling places are concerned—one good-sized room in an apartment hotel brings \$900 a year, and three rooms cost \$1,800, \$1,500, according to their size and situation. Single rooms looking out on nothing more cheerful than an inclosed court, cost never less than \$600 in high-class houses. And these prices are exclusive of meals. And yet apartment hotels are going up all over the city, and none, so far as can be learned, show the least sign of failing.

Compared with these rents the prices quoted for houses in the same uptown locality by real estate men are cheap. According to them, a three-story and one-half house may be had occasionally for \$1,500 a year, larger ones for from \$1,600 up to \$5,000.

An interesting phase of the housing question in Manhattan is developed by the

fact that just now in many cases well-known people of good social position are renting and living in unimproved flats and parts of houses at which a few years ago they would not have deigned to look, merely on the basis of being in a convenient locality, below the Park and of getting one or two good-sized rooms.

Unimproved flats are not steam heated, and the housekeeping facilities, if there are any at all, leave much to be desired. Originally each was merely a floor of a private house from which the owner was driven by the encroachments of business or some other reason, which was then divided up among several tenants, the parlors usually being rented for some sort of business.

Some of them are on noisy thoroughfares and oftentimes sandwiched between commonplace shops. Nevertheless, every one is grabbed as soon as it is vacant and at almost any price.

One real estate dealer whose place of business is in the fifties who has been in that locality more than a score of years says there is scarcely a floor, a room, an attic even, of any description in the entire neighborhood between Washington Square and Central Park, that will not fetch a good rent if it can be utilized as such dwelling by persons of good social position.

"Once upon a time," he remarked, reminiscently, "I remember that it was a waste of time to offer a floor or an attic situated anywhere near the elevated road to any except business people, and that many persons who owned such places, when a tailor or a dressmaker, immediately picked up their belongings and in high dudgeon moved off to some other place, where they hadn't done it. The situation is very different to-day."

"People who call themselves day fish-bellies live in them," he said, "and they go to shops, between stables even, so long as they are comparatively near Fifth avenue and their environment retains something of the stamp of old-time privacy."

"I have rented, and can rent any day I can get hold of one, a floor of a private house in the fifties, for \$100 a month, even when a milliner or dressmaker occupies the parlor floor. When a house is let for \$100 a month, Fifth avenue I can get much more than that for a floor."

"There is a well-known sculptor who pays a big price for the best of the old simply because it is between Fifth and Sixth avenues. Some of the best-known people in society go to that stable and most cheerfully to what was once the sculptor's bedroom, even on occasion sitting at a studio luncheon sent in from outside, or a studio tea, with apparently as much satisfaction as if they were visiting a place."

"The fact is, rents have grown to such proportions that the few who, for the most part, live in the city, and who once thought they could never live in anything smaller than a four-story house are glad enough to put up with a floor, and other people who occupy two-story flats have come down to one of medium size."

Contrary to what some suppose, the building of many new apartment houses uptown does nothing whatever to lower rents down here. On the contrary, in the first-class apartment houses between Central Park and the city, the rents were never so high as they are to-day, some of them mounting up to \$4,500.

But for all that, do not believe New York's population stands much chance of being diminished on this score. Even in the choice between two or three rooms in Manhattan and a good-sized house in the suburbs, the latter is almost every head of a family will choose the rooms.

"Families with small children do move and prefer to live in the suburbs, but they move every year, but the others stay."

NEW TYPE OF BUSINESS WOMAN.

She Who Looks Well and Can Be Charming in Her Great Dress.

The woman of fine presence and all-around social cleverness has a two-to-one better chance in the business world just now than the trained specialist, in whatever department. Tactful, pleasing woman, no matter how slight the technical knowledge, is in demand and gets the chance to extend their usefulness while the speedy stenographers, efficient bookkeepers and the like make barely living wages. Many women who had no idea of working have entered the lists at the solicitation of those who recognized their fitness.

In the beauty parlors frequented by wealthy people, the trained specialist is not so much in demand as the woman of good social position and an admirable air of interest and affability. Her gown alone is worth going to see. The arrangement of her hair, even the fashion of her belt clasp, smacks of exclusiveness and inside knowledge as to modes. And when she beckons the attendant to whom the customer is to be assigned it is with quite the manner of performing a benevolent act.

She is only a paid servant. The real mistress sheltered in her inside office is a plainly-dressed, thoughtful-looking woman, with perhaps neither the taste nor the inclination to get herself up in glorious array, but she has a sense of the dignity of her position, and she has the ability to build up a properly educated clientele, however, and the sense to know that there should be an attractive senseless, but a very cleverly planned and executed from care whose entire time could be devoted to looking agreeable.

In a surprising private sanitarium is another day, a mistress, a woman of good looking woman who knows nothing whatever of nursing but has a pretty sympathetic way about her, and who is favored with both by guests and patients. She always exceptionally well dressed, a prepossessing recommendation for the establishment, and she is never without a letter employed by several of the great specialists to interview people when the doctor is away.

It is the thing now in the exclusive dress-making and outfitting establishments to have the patrons received as though they were guests. And a woman with good looks, a pleasant voice, and a ready forward and make customers feel at home is a needed adjunct. She it is who shows them samples and takes them around the show cases, where costly gowns and waists are on exhibition. All this is done as though it mattered not a whit whether an order was secured or not. When the customer is called in and the woman who receives goes to welcome other guests. Social tact and a ready wit are no less important a part in business as now.

Sometimes the woman who is exceptionally clever, well dressed and sophisticated is employed very pleasantly as a paid companion by wealthy people who want an instructed person's company, or by young women who may not make alone. But the field in which the tactful woman who is self-dependent finds best remuneration is as a promoter of mining stock, real estate investments, savings bank securities and like issues. The promoter for these things is a very cleverly planned and executed admirably employed to beat up purchasers and demonstrate the efficacy of household and dry goods items.

Business men venture and interests to advance can detect the right qualifications for a successful promoter in a moment. Not long ago a young woman was tempted to meet by genuine business advice, which stated that experience was not necessary, nor technical training, and that a woman with a pleasant voice and a ready forward and make customers feel at home is a needed adjunct. She it is who shows them samples and takes them around the show cases, where costly gowns and waists are on exhibition. All this is done as though it mattered not a whit whether an order was secured or not. When the customer is called in and the woman who receives goes to welcome other guests. Social tact and a ready wit are no less important a part in business as now.

"You are just the sort of lady we want," the man said. "Your looks and manner would take you anywhere, and you'd be making big commissions besides the salary in less than a fortnight."

The young woman withdrew, nor did she ever answer the three letters she received asking her to consider the proposition. But the case illustrates how much women of good culture and address are being utilized in business.

A WEDDING IN OLD VIRGINIA.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A WOMAN WHO IS NOW A GRANDMOTHER.

Arrival of the Bridegroom and His Cavalcade—Journey of the Bride Procession to the Bride's New Home—Three Days of Merry-making as a Welcome.

"How did rich people marry in your time?" asked a young woman of a stately woman who is a grandmother who, like herself was a guest at a recent noted wedding. And the grandmother, who comes from Virginia, told this story:

"Your grandfather was the richest young man in the county, and I had a fortune of my own. The day of our marriage he came on horseback to my home."

"He was attended by his young friends, each of whom rode a white horse. They wore high white hats, white silk knee breeches and white silk hosiery. Their shoes were adorned with great buckles."

"They came up the long lane which led to the great lawn in front of my home and their coming was quite like a pageant. This cavalcade was followed by a large number of slaves, the property of your grandfather. They were all mounted; there was one slave for each of your grandfather's friends."

"When your grandfather reached the entrance to the lawn he dismounted and was met by my father. As each attendant dismounted he was presented by my grandfather to my father, and the procession moved up the great walk to the wide portico of our home. There they were seated and served with such refreshments as all Southern gentlemen dispense to their guests."

"The attendants were conducted to various apartments to make ready for the evening of the day. When your grandfather had been seated for by his special servant, he descended into the great family room and paid his most distinguished respects to my mother who, at that moment, both by reason of her statelyness and splendor would have been a noticeable personage at any court function."

"After this brief interview my mother withdrew and came to me in my chamber. She was accompanied by my father. The betrothed upon me their most affectionate attention. Then the minister, the Bishop of the State, came in and laid his hands upon me as he had done when I was confirmed by him, and as I knelt before him he gave me his blessing."

"My bridesmaids were then admitted and after each had kissed my hand all withdrew. My brothers and sisters then came in and we had a little reunion. Then came my maid, my old black mammy and her husband, the latter a venerable hostler. They bowed before me, as slaves in those days were accustomed to do before white people, and in leaving me those dear old black people wept as if they never expected to see me again. Then came the other slaves, all of whom I knew by name. The discarded wardrobe of the family were seen in that procession."

"Then I was left alone for a few minutes—all alone in that time I bowed devoutly and in that attitude my father came in and found me. I arose and he conducted me to the great salon below."

"The ceremony of my marriage was much the same as that observed to-day. Our Church has not deviated from its ceremonial in such a matter, but it may have been tempted to change some of its rubrics."

"A wedding breakfast followed. There was no music before or after the ceremony. After the breakfast I was conducted to my mother's old family room and there under her direction my wedding gown was changed to a riding habit. As I passed out your grandfather met me and conducted me to the old stile block at the entrance of the lawn. It was covered with flowers and my father and mother were waiting for me. They were both dressed in white and as we passed they bent to the earth, which was scattered with flowers."

"When we reached the entrance to the great lawn in front of your grandfather's house he lifted me from my saddle and, taking me by the hand, he led me in the courtyard to the old covered porch with flowers to the lintel of his house, which had welcomed other brides for several generations. At the entrance of the house your grandfather handed me the keys to the same."

"After a rest from the journey I was prepared for the banquet which had been equalled it. What a splendid recollection it is! The dance which followed no one ever attempted to describe. The flower girls and bridesmaids were all dressed in white. The plantation was a great, swelling volume of melody. I never knew what it was."

"The next day—a glorious one—there was a fox-hunt. A dinner followed which lasted far into the night. And again the plantation was swayed by melody such as one hears nowhere else. On the next day there was a *fête champêtre*; in the evening, a ball to the knights and the court of beauty. The next day was the week there was a gathering of the slaves of both plantations, songs in the cabins, walks about the grounds and a distribution of gifts."

"That is how the rich people married in my time, my child, in that blessed State which we call the Old Dominion."

PRETTY CIRCUS WOMEN.

They Must Have Good Looks Nowadays as Well as Good Muscles.

There is a new kind of circus girl, just as there is a new chorus girl. The latest thing in chorus girls is slight and piquant, and in marked physical contrast to the opulent, stalwart beauty who was formerly considered the only type adapted to stage display.

The new kind of circus girl is striking principally on account of her increased opulence. The hard-faced, dried-up rider with her set smile and ghastly little coquettish is a thing of the past.

The women are nowadays fresher, prettier and nearly always better dressed than their drab, worn-out predecessors. It is said to be regarded now as important as their athletic skill.

One of the most successful women was a woman called "The Beautiful Geraldine" who was successful ten years ago from one end of Europe to the other, not because she was skilful in her riding, but because of her supposedly great beauty. Yet to-day she would not seem so much above the average of looks at the Madison Square Garden.

Her dressing is also more tasteful in its colors and the women who this year ride in habits are in every way smarter looking than they were in the past. Her looks that differentiate the present-day circus girl from her predecessors. She is rapidly becoming a thing of beauty as well as of muscle and daring.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

It is interesting to note in these days the smiles of James W. Morrissey. His lot has been as spotless and shiny as it was in the brave days of old when he managed the business of the pious prima donna Emma Abbott, who interpolated "Nearer, My God, to Thee" into opera, and kissed a man longer than any other woman had before dared to kiss one on the stage—at least, in the sight of an audience. Mr. Morrissey's cutaway coat fits him just as smoothly as it did in those days. But they are not the same coat and hat.

Mr. Morrissey, it may be recalled, invented the Emma Abbott kiss, and did the duty of passionate press agent for it throughout the land, till easy people actually believed in it. People who knew were aware that Miss Abbott and dear old William Castle just used to stand with their mouths about an inch apart and wait while Mr. Morrissey, who held the wig, counted forty seconds by his watch. Then he would whisper "Off," and it was all over.

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CURE FOR BEAUTY BLEMISHES.

MOLES ARE AMONG THEM, IF THEY DO INDICATE LUCK.

Some Methods of Removing Them and Warts, Sties and Stains of the Skin as Well—And Red Faces and Pale Faces, Too, Can Be Faced by Health Rules.

Moles may be considered to bring good luck, but they are not always regarded as marks of beauty. For all that they are best left alone unless they show an inclination to grow, in which case they require surgical aid.

In the earliest stage of growth, the application of a point of lunar caustic to the centre of the mole will often cause it to disappear. Or painting the surface with a solution of lunar caustic, or of iodine, is often effective.

Lunar caustic must be used carefully and iodine discolors the skin temporarily. For this reason it is best to apply it at night. Use a tiny camel's hair brush, when applying iodine, and wash the brush clean and dry it ready for use again.

If the mole is not only large but it is left in the hands of the doctor, the effectiveness of the treatment is lessened by repeated use of a brush filled with the dried iodine.

Moles are also often successfully treated by being repeatedly injected with weak aqueous solutions of iodine, ammonia or nitric acid. This is a dangerous experiment, however, unless taken under a doctor's orders.

For moles which more closely resemble freckles, use:

Muriate ammonia.....1 dram
Dilute muriatic acid.....1 dram
Oil of sweet almonds.....1 dram
Rose water.....1 pint

These other beauty blemishes, warts, are often successfully treated by applying two drops of Fowler's solution three times daily. After a time they disappear and the skin appears normal in a week or ten days. Warts may also be cured by treating them carefully once a day with a camel's hair brush dipped in this solution:

Salicylic acid.....1 dram
Lactic acid.....1 dram
Glycerine.....1 dram

A sty, which is another blemish on beauty's face, is best treated with an application of hot cloths. Wring them out of water as hot as can be borne. Also bathe the eyes frequently with warm water containing drops of camphor, the proportion being five drops to half a cup of water. Remove yellow stains from the face by a pint of white wine vinegar and let it stand for ten days; then draw off the vinegar and add to it half a pint of rose water. Keep this liquid bottled, and when using pour a tablespoonful or so on a bit of cloth and sponge the face. Let it dry on the skin.

Vinegar, as is well known, prevents discoloration. Bathe a bruise with vinegar as soon as the accident happens. If it can be kept in place, lay a cloth soaked in vinegar over the injury, moistening it often, and there will be little, if any, discoloration.

To remove stains from the neck caused by wearing a black ribbon, bathe the neck in water containing powdered borax, about a tablespoonful to two quarts of water. Rinse with clear water and dry; then wipe the neck with a cloth dipped in a lotion made of one ounce of acetic acid, two ounces of glycerine and three ounces of rose water. If several applications do not help, bathe the neck with three parts of lemon juice and one part water.

If the face is too red for beauty, be careful of the diet. Take no hot drinks, but cooling ones, lemonade or tea, cooled by ice, but not "ice cold," which would be quite as harmful as a hot drink. Don't wash the face with very cold water, nor when it is flushed. Lukewarm water is better. When

going out in the sun, wear a thin veil. Hot sunbaths, which is the case, are helpful. Try the footbath, every third night for two weeks. Have the water as hot as can be borne. This draws the blood from the head.

If the face is unnaturally pale, after blemishes with rose water and giving it a rub with gentle rubbing, use a Turkish towel to apply a lotion made of four ounces of rose water, three ounces of glycerine and two drams of liquid ammonia. Rub it well into the skin and then wipe it off with a short towel.

A daily wash of two or three miles will improve a pale or sallow complexion and perhaps in time give rose cheeks.

Walk quickly. Breathe deeply. Take a long breath, close your mouth and rest in the breath a long time; then exhale slowly. Your cheeks will flush with the exertion of "really and truly breathing," your head will be held more erect, and you will feel more energetic. The skin will become clearer and roses grow in the cheeks.

TRYING A NEW SODA DRINK.

Experience of a Venturesome Man at the Opening of the Season.

"About now," said Mr. Nozbley, "is the time when the dispensers of soda water are thinking up new drinks for summer and trying them on an unsuspecting public to see whether they are likely to take or not. I saw one of these new drinks announced yesterday on a paper pasted on a soda water signboard in front of a drug store, and asked for one."

"Are you in good health?" the man behind the soda counter asked.

"Why, sure!"

"Make your will!" said the soda man.

"Yep."

"The soda man reached down under the counter and brought out a hatchet—not to tomahawk